



# The **HAVA** Bulletin

An Update on the Help America Vote Act

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June 2006

## What's Happening this Summer

The Office of the Secretary of State is working closely with municipalities on several fronts to implement the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) requirements. The two major components of HAVA are the Central Voter Registration System (CVR) and the Accessible Voting Solution (AVS). Here is an overview, with more details inside.

**Central Voter Registration System (CVR):** The State has taken over the management of the CVR from the initial vendor, but is keeping the successful *ElectionNet* software. We are now working with PCC Technology Group, LLC (PCC), which created *ElectionNet* and has been part of the project from the start. Each municipality will join the CVR in a unique way, taking part in the major efforts of: 1) Data Conversion; 2) Voter Card Imaging; and 3) Training. Many municipalities have already begun work on one or more of these efforts, and you should be on the lookout for mailings and e-mails from the Secretary of State providing general information, as well as information specific to your municipality. Our interactions with municipalities will increase over the next weeks and months.

**Accessible Voting Solution (AVS):** HAVA requires voters with disabilities to be able to vote privately and independently (without a person reading or marking their ballots for them). To meet this requirement, the State issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) to begin the procurement process for accessible voting equipment. Over the past several months, AVS vendors have reviewed the State's RFP, submitted bids to the State, and demonstrated their systems for review by a committee of experts. More detail on this project is provided on Page 2 of this newsletter.

### Who's Who on the HAVA Team

*Call or e-mail if you have questions or concerns.*

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*AVS (Accessibility):*

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*AVS Project Manager*

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## Data Conversion

As we continue our full implementation of the CVR, the Department of the Secretary of State's Data Conversion Team will be working with you (clerks and registrars) to move existing voter registration data from your current system to the CVR. The strategy for completing this process will vary from municipality to municipality, based on factors such as voter population and the current process or system you use to store voter registration information. Regardless of the process, every municipality will have an opportunity to review the data prior to its final movement into the CVR.

In the weeks ahead you will receive specific information detailing the strategy we will use to verify that all of your municipality's voter data is moved into the CVR. A first step, common to all municipalities, will be to ensure that we have a complete and accurate street file (a list of all streets, street ranges and their associated district information for your municipality). Single and multi-district municipalities may have different processes for reviewing street libraries. You will soon receive additional details about this process, and we anticipate that the street files will be available for your review beginning in early July.

## HAVA Municipal Information Survey

You will be receiving an informational survey from the Division of Elections within a couple of weeks. In anticipation of implementing both the CVR and the AVS to municipalities, there is a lot of data gathering, planning and scheduling that needs to take place well in advance. We will be offering training for each system to at least one person per municipality, and in most cases two people. We need to be sure that we have accurate and pertinent information to make this happen in the most effective manner. Please complete the survey and return it as soon as possible so that we may plan according to our mutual needs.

## Accessible Voting Solution (AVS)

Currently the AVS Selection Team is in the process of evaluating the five vendor bids for an Accessible Voting Solution required under HAVA. A diverse selection team was assembled with representatives from our office, disability advocates, and municipal clerks. In addition, a group of municipal clerks and individuals with disabilities attended a separate, full-day demonstration for each vendor to try out the equipment and provide their observations on election management and accessibility for voters.

As this newsletter went to print, the AVS team was meeting to review the observations recorded at the demonstrations and assign ratings to each of the proposed solutions. These ratings will be based on accessibility (for voters with disabilities), ease of use and management (for election officials), accuracy and security, project implementation, vendor qualifications, and cost. The team expects to announce a selection in the next couple of weeks.

Once a vendor is selected, we will immediately begin the process of procuring and implementing the AVS statewide in time for the general election in November. Each polling place will be provided with one accessible voting unit at no cost to the municipalities. The State will also provide all required training for election officials and will coordinate voter outreach services. We are very excited about this process and look forward to working closely with the local voters and election officials to make this project a success.

In addition to requiring that each polling place have an accessible voting solution, HAVA requires that the polling place is physically accessible to allow voters to enter and use the equipment. Our office will be conducting a follow up to the 2004 Polling Place Accessibility Survey to confirm that each municipality has eliminated the barriers noted in the 2004 report.

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## CVR Equipment

- Please refer to your *CVR Equipment Use Agreement* for information pertaining to the maintenance and use of CVR computer equipment, especially for municipal business not related to the CVR.
- Since the equipment was delivered to and is kept by municipal election officials, the State assumes the equipment will be insured by the local jurisdiction under any existing insurance policies that cover municipal offices or equipment. (See the FAQ below for more information on insuring the equipment.)
- The State will be providing a Help Desk telephone number to report such problems once municipal officials are online with the CVR. Until the formal Help Desk is in operation, please report any problems with the equipment or software provided for operation of the CVR to the Division of Elections as soon as possible at 624-7650.

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

Q: What if my town doesn't have internet access?

A: The CVR application, known as ElectionNet, is an internet, web-based application. In order to maintain voter registrations on the CVR, internet access is required. **Joan Bolduc**, the Data Communications Customer Assistance Coordinator with the State Office of Information Technology (OIT), will be contacting Clerks or Registrars in municipalities that are not currently connected to the Internet. She will be working with you, coordinating and contracting with vendors, and scheduling the work orders to ensure you are able to access the CVR. If you have any questions, please call Joan Bolduc at 624-9904.

Q: Are municipalities required to insure the CVR equipment and if so, what is the value of the equipment so I can provide the amount to my insurance carrier?

A: Municipalities are expected to insure this equipment and the value amount is \$2800. For large cities that have a high speed printer and scanner, the value amount is \$4900.

Q: Can municipalities get a discount on paper, toner, and other consumables for the CVR equipment?

A: Yes, municipal officials are able to take advantage of State discounts with some vendors. When you need to purchase replacement supplies for the CVR equipment (or any municipal office supplies) you can contact the State Central Warehouse at 287-3644 or Office Max in Portland and let them know you are ordering under the State of Maine Contract. You will need to provide your own municipal Purchase Order number or otherwise work out payment arrangements with the vendor. If you would like further information about available vendor discounts, you may contact Johnnie Meehl at 624-7648. For more information about ordering, go to: [www.maine.gov/bgs/centralserv/central\\_warehouse.htm](http://www.maine.gov/bgs/centralserv/central_warehouse.htm)

Q: What are the next steps for the Voter Card Imaging effort?

A: If you have not yet had your voter cards imaged our vendor, PCC, will be contacting you in the coming weeks to schedule an appointment to visit your municipality. Some officials have asked whether the voter cards must reflect E-911 address changes and the answer is "no". As long as your voter list, paper and/or electronic, reflects the voters' actual current address information you do not need to update the voter cards. If you have already had your voter cards imaged, you will see the images attached to your voter records in the ElectionNet CVR application. For new voter cards that you have received since your cards were imaged, you will have to scan the cards directly into the ElectionNet CVR application once online.

# ***Questions about CVR, AVS or HAVA?***

***Website:*** [www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/hava/](http://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/elec/hava/)

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***Phone:*** 624-7650 (Division of Elections)

